TOMMY SWEET-TOOTH ...and..LITTLE GIRL BLUE



OUDLPHINE SCRIBNER GATES

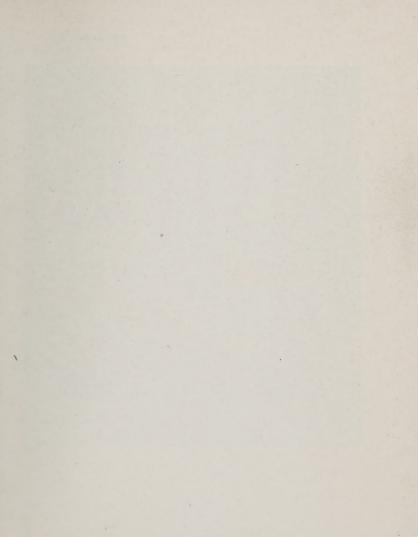




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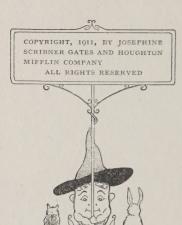
TOMMY SWEET-TOOTH AND LITTLE GIRL BLUE

BY
JOSEPHINE SCRIBNER GATES

ILLUSTRATED BY ESTHER V. CHURBUCK



BOSTON AND NEW YORK
HOUGHTON MIFFLIN COMPANY
The Kiverside Press Cambridge



Published September 1911





TOMMY SWEET-TOOTH

YOU remember about how the Little Girl Blue Live Doll lived in the woods till she learned to say "please," of course.

Now what do you suppose she did next? It is almost too dreadful to tell, — but she did it. She really ran away!

It was n't quite all her fault, I am glad to say, for when she heard her little mother night after night say, "I don't want to go to bed yet," of course this Live Doll decided that she did n't want to go to bed so early.

Over and over she heard this, and finally, one night when there had been a little more trouble than usual about it, Little Girl Blue decided to run away, and when she found a good place where people did n't have to go to bed till they wanted to, she would come back and take her little mother to that lovely place. She was sure they would then be very happy.

The next day, when her little mother had gone to kindergarten, Little Girl Blue hastened to her own wee dresser, and took from it a clean lace-frilled nighty. She placed it on the floor and wrapped carefully within it everything that a well-regulated Live Doll needs to keep her looking spick and span.

She made of them a neat bundle, which she tied to the end of her own umbrella with a blue sash.



She stood before the mirror to be sure that her blue hat was on perfectly straight. Then she shouldered her bundle, and out of the house up the road to the woods she marched. This was the very same woods where she had once lived and heard the squirrels, the bunnies, the birds, and bees all say the "please" poem.

As she fluttered along, a great commotion arose all about her.

Sharp chirps from the birds and shrill chatterings from the squirrels echoed and reëchoed from far and near, like a trumpet-call, seeming to say, "Here comes Little Girl Blue; I wonder what she is about now!"



As they anxiously hovered over their various broods the Live Doll tossed her head, and with an expectant expression hurriedly went on her way, eager to



find a place where she could go to bed just when she chose, and perhaps where, if she took a notion, she might even be allowed to stay up all night!

Her eyes sparkled as she pictured herself going home again and telling her little mother of this wonderful place where they could live in peace and harmony. Such a lovely day as it was! The sunshine poured its golden flood of light through the branches outspread above her, covering the ground with golden patches and shadows. Little Girl Blue dearly loved to watch them dance about her feet as the wind tossed the leaves to and fro.

She paused to listen to the silvery song of the brook, and she longed to take off her shoes and stockings and cool her little bare feet on the wet stones; but there was no time for that to-day, so on she went.

Suddenly she saw far ahead of her—what? An odd little fat boy, with such



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a jolly smile, and he, too, shouldered a stick from the end of which dangled a bundle. Overjoyed at the prospect of company, she cried, "Hullo!"

"Hullo!" was the cheery response.

"You are running away, are n't you?" questioned Little Girl Blue.

"Yes, how did you guess it?" asked the queer little boy.

"Oh, 'cause your bundle looks just like mine, and I'm running away. I'll tell you why if you will me."

"Oh," said the boy, "I don't mind telling you, but first I'll tell you my name. It's Tommy Sweet-tooth. I'm called that because I'm so fond of candy.

"I'm running away because my mother won't let me eat all I want. I know I can find a place where I can just eat and eat.

"Perhaps I may work in a candy store. They always give you bushels. They have shiny brass shovels, and you can shovel the candy right into your pockets. They really want you to, so





you'll get tired of it, but I know I would n't."

His eyes twinkled as he thought of the shelves filled with glass jars in which gleamed twisted pink peppermint and cinnamon sticks, fat chocolates, and masses of clear rock-candy.

"That would be sweet," agreed Little Girl Blue. "Perhaps I'd like to go with you, for I am seeking a place where I can do as I please, especially about going to bed early. Mothers are great fussers about that!"

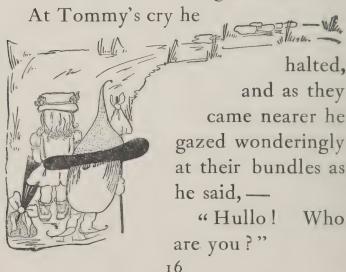
And she sighed heavily as she walked along beside this funny boy.

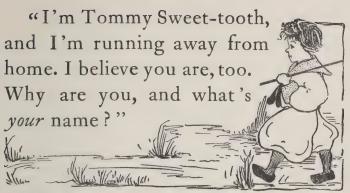
The silence which followed was sud-

denly broken by a shout from Tom-my.

"Hi there! wait for us!"

Little Girl Blue looked far ahead, and saw another boy, who also carried a stick from which hung a bundle.





The new boy hung his head for a moment, then replied,—

"It's Dick, but I'm mostly called 'Shockhead,' because I don't like to brush my hair and fix up, so I just can't stand it at home any longer. Do you know my mother makes me wash my face and brush my hair every time I come into the house! She even wants



me to clean my nails; and besides all this, she makes me brush my teeth after every meal. What do you think of that?"

As he finished, Little Girl Blue gazed with pride at her beautiful nails, which really looked like sea-shells.

She thought, too, of her teeth, which were like a row of pearls, thanks to the faithful use of the wee tooth-brush reposing in her bundle.

She decided that this boy was very unreasonable to leave home because his mother wanted him to keep clean, and she rejoiced as Tommy replied,—

"I always did do those things. I like to be all spandy because mother always looks so pleased when I do; and then everything seems so shiny and glad.



"The only thing she does I don't like is to make me stop eating candy when I have n't had half enough. That's why I'm running away.

"This is Little Girl Blue. She, too, is running away, because her mother makes her go to bed every night at half-past seven!"

"That's no reason at all for running away," said Dick quickly; "but then I 'spose she thinks it is. Let's go find a place where we can do as we please."

"That's just what we want to do," declared Tommy; and on they went, each eagerly watching for the desired spot.

Presently they noticed what appeared to be a small bunch of pink gingham lying under a bush. As they drew nearer they found it was a little curly-headed girl with tear-wet eyes and flushed cheeks, fast asleep.

As Sweet-tooth gave one buttoned slipper a poke, over she turned, yawned, and cried, sleepily, "Lemme lone! I'm

not awake yet. I don't want any break-fast!"

At this speech the boys laughed aloud, and shouted,

"Oh, Sleepyhead! Come! Get up!"

"My name's Betty," she cried indignantly. "You need n't call me Sleepyhead. I'm called that enough at home. That's one reason why I'm running away."

As she spoke she slowly rose to her feet and held aloft a small stick from which dangled a bundle.

She now caught sight of the bundles carried by the three on-lookers, and her face beamed as she cried joyfully,—



"Oh, you, too, are running away, are n't you? May I go with you?"

"You may if you will hurry," re-

plied Tommy.

"I can hurry when I want to," she said; "I don't want to at home. I don't like to get up in the morning, so I'm late to meals and to school.



"Then everything goes wrong. Mother looks sad, and I just decided to run away, for I'm tired of it."

Her sky-blue eyes brimmed over, and she turned away, that the boys might not see her tears.

Then she saw Little Girl Blue gazing at her in wide-eyed astonishment as she cried,—

"You don't like to get up in the morning! Why that's no reason at all for running away! The thing I don't like is to go to bed. I love the morning time, and I'm always out early listening to the birds. They sound so merry and glad. Did n't you ever hear them?"

"No, and I don't want to," said Betty. "I'm glad you are all running away. I think mothers need a lesson."

"Indeed they do!" chorused the three.

"We'll soon find a place where we can do as we please!" said Tommy.

"Let's play we are a regiment; I'll be captain. Shoulder bundles! Mark time! Forward! March!"



On they tramped, single-file, looking like four naughty soldiers who had deserted the camp. Up hill and down they marched, till finally they saw an odd little brown house.

"Halt!" ordered the Captain. "I'm hungry. Let's see if we can find something to eat here."

He tapped at the door, which was opened by a sweet little old lady, who gladly gave them their dinner. As they ate, she questioned them, and each one, longing for sympathy, told a woeful tale. When they had finished, she smiled shrewdly, and said,—

"Well, if you are looking for a place

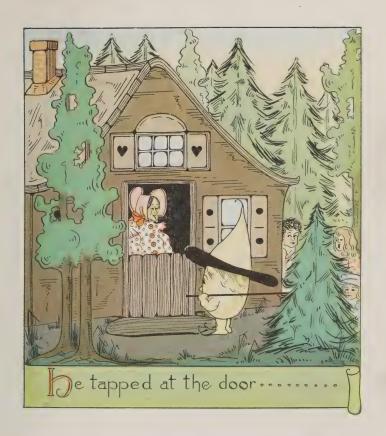
where you can do as you please, you have found it.

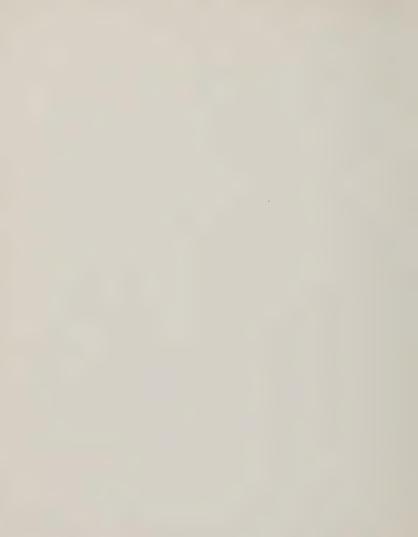
"Stay here with me. I'll be your mother. Such mothers as you have surely do not want such children.

"Now, you can play about till supper-time while I finish my work."

Delighted that they had so soon found what they were seeking, they danced about in the greatest glee.

No better place could have been found. Near by, a lovely stream purled its way along over the stones.





As they were exclaiming over that, they discovered a cave, and such a cave! Here they could play Robin Hood to their hearts' content.

Then they found the dearest little woodsy spot, shut in by great moss-covered stones which formed the walls of a real room. This would serve for the best kind of a doll-house.



The afternoon passed all too quickly, and just as they decided they were hungry, the mother appeared with bowls of milk and a great plate of snowy bread, honey, and gingerbread.

Well, this was a great place, to be sure!

After supper, as the shadows were falling, the new mother led them into the house and up-stairs, where they found three little clean white beds.

As she turned to go below, Betty cried in dismay, —

"Why, you did n't hear our prayers, nor tell us a bed-time story, nor tuck us in, nor kiss us good-night!" "Yes!" echoed the two little boys, "our mothers always do that; are n't you going to?"

"Indeed not," replied the new mother, tossing her head. "You did n't like your mothers and left them. I want you to stay here. I love children, and I'm lonesome, so I'm not going to do anything your mothers did!"

And away she went, followed by Little Girl Blue, who timidly asked where her bed was.

"Yours!" exclaimed the new mother in surprise, "You can't have any; you ran away because you did n't like to go to bed. Run out and stay with



the owls and bats. They don't like to go to bed either, so you ought to be happy with them."

Poor Little Girl Blue ran out to the glen and threw herself on a bed of moss.

"Such a mother," she wailed, "I don't like her a bit! Why, oh why, did I run away!"

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"Well, if you are looking for a place

where you can do as you please, you have found it.

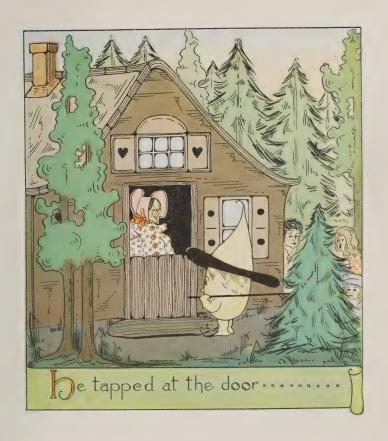
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the owls and bats. They don't like to go to bed either, so you ought to be happy with them."

Poor Little Girl Blue ran out to the glen and threw herself on a bed of moss.

"Such a mother," she wailed, "I don't like her a bit! Why, oh why, did I run away!"

The tears rolled down her cheeks as she lay looking up at the moonlight shining through the trees and listening to the drowsy baby birds twitter and chirp as their mothers hovered over them; and, longing to be folded in her dear little mother's arms, she soon sobbed herself to sleep.

The next morning, as usual, she wakened to hear the chorus of the birds.

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For a moment she wondered why she was sleeping under a tree instead of in her cunning brass bed beside her little mother. Then she remembered.

"I wonder why I'm not glad," she said to herself as she ran to the stream to bathe, then brushed her hair and attended to her teeth and nails till both shone like polished pearl.



"I do love to look nice; maybe Dick will, too, when he sees me. Prob'ly when he sees my nails he'll quick put his hands behind him."

She ran into the house to find Dick and Tommy eating breakfast.



"Hullo!" cried Tommy, with his mouth full of sugar. "Is n't this great! I can have the sugar-bowl all to myself. See, it's chuck full of lumps!"

"And see me," cried Dick. "I did wash my hands, but I did n't clean my nails nor brush my teeth, and she never said a word."

Little Girl Blue looked at him in amazement.

"You did n't brush your teeth nor clean your nails, and yet you are eating! Ugh!!" she cried.

"Taint any worse than wanting to stay up all night," said Dick, with a quick glance at her perfect little hands; and then he did put his own behind him as he swung himself out of the room.



Little Girl Blue ate her breakfast of porridge in silence, and presently whispered, —

"Tommy, do you like our new mother?"

"Oh, pretty well when it's light," said Tommy, dubiously, "but I think she does n't make a very good dark mother."

"I think she does n't make a very good any kind of a mother, and sometimes I wish I had n't runned away!" said the Live Doll, with a quiver about the rosebud mouth.

"Oh," said Tommy, consolingly, she'll be all right to-day. I felt that

way, too, last night. I wanted a drink, but she would n't pay any attention. At home, the instant I move or speak, mother is right there by me, and I just love the time when I go to bed. She talks so dear, all about what I been doin' all day, and asks if I'm satisfied with every single thing; and if I am n't, she just makes me long to have mornin'



come so I can try all over to be gooder; and then she hears my prayers and kisses me. My! when I thought about it last night, if it had n't been dark I'd a scooted straight home.

"It'll be better to-day; we'll be used to it. She has n't any children, and she don't know how to do with 'em!"

"No, I s'pose not," said Little Girl Blue sadly. "It's just the same as if we had n't any mothers. We would n't know but what she was a good one. Anyhow, we can do as we please, and that's what we want."

"Yes," said Tommy; "let's don't think about her. Of course, no mother could possibly be quite like our own.
"Hullo! here comes Betty Sleepy-head. She hardly looks awake yet."



Betty slowly came to the table, yawned, rubbed her eyes, looked about, then cried, sharply,—

"Where is she?"

"Gone to milk the cow," replied Tommy.

Betty ran to the kitchen stove, then back, crying, —

"Did n't she keep anything hot for me? My mother always did, and she made me such crispy toast with the butter all melted in, and a egg in the shell just the way I like it."

"Is that so?" drawled the new mother, who now entered the room. "I thought she was so dreadful you could n't live with her. Seems to me I would n't have left such a kind mother as that. Come, hurry up; I want to finish the work."

Poor little Betty's heart beat fast and hard as she swallowed her cold



mush, which was plentifully besprinkled with tears. As she rose from the table, she heard Dick crying bitterly, and ran out to find that he had fallen in a bog and was dripping with black mud.

"I want a bath and clean clothes," he cried.

"Can't have it here," said the new mother.

"But I must. I can't stay so dirty as this!" he declared.



"Oh, you will soon get used to it. It's only a question of time, anyhow. You wanted to be dirty; and, if you never bathed, you would soon be just as dirty as you are now. You run away now, all of you, and play. After a while I will let you go with me to my sugarcamp, where you can help me make my sugar-eggs. I make them to sell, and it is great sport. I'll ring the big bell when I'm ready for you."

Delighted at such a prospect, they ran to the stream, and just as they were deep in the mysteries of building a dam, ding-dong, ding-dong, pealed out the bell.

Tommy started at once, but Betty cried, "Oh, don't let's go quite yet. We ought to finish it. They will wait for us, I know."

But they did n't wait; and when the three appeared, the little brown house was deserted.

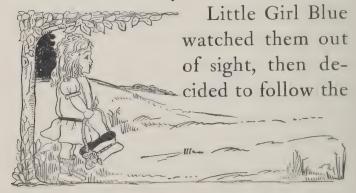
"Now," cried Dick, spitefully, "you old Betty Sleepyhead, you made us be late, and we can't see the fun!"

"I don' care," said Betty; "my mother always waited, and I thought she would. I don't like her for a mother. I'm going straight home. I've got the dearest, sweetest mother that ever lived!"

"No such thing!" exclaimed her hearers in one breath. "Mine's the very best in the whole world!"

"I'm going home, too," announced Dick. "I'd rather see my mother than any number of sugar-camps!"

As he spoke he turned right-aboutface and was closely followed by Betty.



fresh wagon-tracks, feeling sure they would lead her to the sugar-camp.

On and on she tramped, till suddenly far ahead she saw Tommy capering about the jolliest kind of a fire.

Over the crackling flames hung a kettle; and as the delicious odor from the fumes was now wafted toward her, she ran to greet the fat boy, crying, —

"Here I am, Tommy. Can I have some maple-sugar, too?"

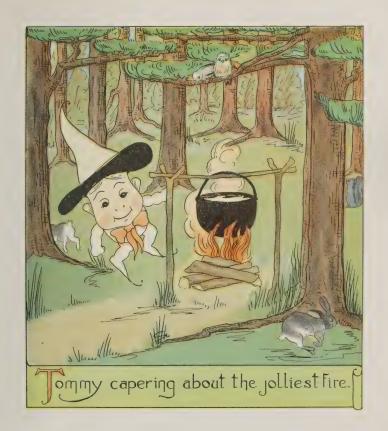
"Of course," cried Tommy, delighted to see her; "where are the others?"

"Oh, they went home. I guess they were homesick; but we are n't, are we?" she asked a bit wistfully.

"Well, I guess not!" declared Tommy, excitedly; "not when we can eat all the sugar-eggs we want as we pile them away in the sugar-house. The fun's just beginning. You see she blows the eggs from the shells, seals one end and pours it full of hot syrup. Then she puts them in this tub of ice. When they are cold we pile them away in the sugarhouse. These are ready now. Just eat one."



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And he carefully cracked and pealed the shell from one and handed it to the Live Doll.

"Are n't they great!" he cried as he also ate one. "Shall I fix another for you?"

"Oh, no," said the Dolly, "I could n't eat another, but they are delicious."

"You can't!" cried Tommy, in surprise. "Why, I've eatened three and I have n't had half enough! I believe I could eat a bushel."

He continued to eat as they worked, and suddenly Little Girl Blue noticed that he seemed changed somehow. He looked fatter and so queer.



She said nothing, but watched closely. Each time they camefrom the sugarhouse he seemed much changed.

She finally said, timidly, —

"Tommy, dear, don't you think you

better stop eating them? You are getting so fat and queer."

"My, no!" he replied. "I'm having the best time. I only eat a few from each basketful I pile away."

The fourth time he came out he

began to look as though his coat would certainly burst open; and the fifth time, two buttons did snap off.

The sixth time, Little Girl Blue finished her part of the work and sat down under a tree to wait for Tommy.

"He's a long time coming," she thought; "I wish he would n't eat so many."

Then she heard a queer rustling, and there rolled out what appeared to be a large egg, but it was really Tommy, who asked uneasily, -

"Little Girl Blue, do I look queer? I can't walk very well. I just seem to

wobble along."

Little Girl Blue's eyes grew big and round as she cried in dismay,—

"Oh, Tommy, you kind of look like

an egg! What will you do?"

"She's a nice kind of a mother to have!" he cried, indignantly. "My mother would never have allowed me to eat so many!"

And the big tears rolled all over the egg as it settled down in a hollow, where Tommy was soon fast asleep.



The sugar lady now appeared with a basket full of sugar-eggs on her arm.

"Come, children," she said, "we'll go to the village now and sell our eggs.

"Why, what's this?" she cried, in

surprise, gazing at Tommy.

"Oh," said Little Girl Blue, much distressed, "it's Tommy. He getted to be a egg!"

"Well! well!" said the old lady, placing him in the basket, "we'll take him to his mother. I think she will be glad enough to have her boy back again."

They walked along rapidly until they

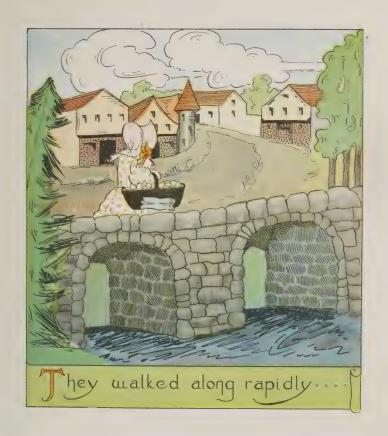


reached the village, and the sugar lady went straight to a certain house and knocked at the door.

A lady with a tear-stained face appeared, and the visitor handed her the egg, saying, —

"Here's a present for you. I hope you will enjoy it."

Then away she went in such haste that she never noticed that Little Girl Blue followed Tommy's mother into the house.





The Live Doll loved Tommy, and she decided to stay and see how pleased his mother would be when Tommy awakened. She was so tiny the lady never saw her as she bustled about the kitchen, stirred the fire, and brought forth a saucepan.

She sighed heavily as she placed it over the coals, and said,—

"I'll boil this egg. It will make good syrup. I do wish Tommy were here. He would love it on pancakes."

At this speech Little Girl Blue seemed glued to the floor. *Would* she boil dear little Tommy?

Breathlessly she watched, till just as

the egg was about to be dropped into the shiny pan, she heard a small faraway voice say,—

"O mother dear, don't boil me! I'm in the egg, and I can't get out; please

open it!"

Much startled, the mother opened the egg, only to find a fat, fat boy.

She stared in amazement as the voice

sounded again, nearer now.

"Open it again, mother, please. Every boy you find is make-believe,



till you come to me. I am here, really and truly!"

Again and again the mother broke apart these queer fat boys, finding each one smaller than the last.

Finally, when she had five staring at her, and no Tommy yet, she cried in despair, —

"Why do you tease me with Tommy's voice, when I want my own little boy so much?"

"Mother," came to her ears, very near now, "just try once more and you will find me."

She obeyed, and there out popped Tommy, who placed his arms about



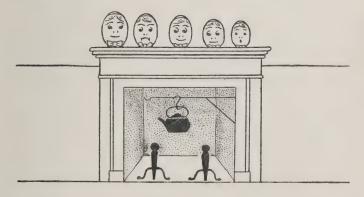
"Oh, my dear, precious mother! How glad I am to see you! I'm sorry I ran away, and I never, never will again!"

Then, as he caught sight of Little Girl Blue, he exclaimed,—

"See the Live Dolly, mother. She, too, ran away. Let us tell you all about it."

And with Little Girl Blue on one knee and Tommy on the other, the mother listened to the strange tale. At the end Tommy said earnestly,—

"Mother, dear, I know now you were right. You always are, and I am going to try harder than I ever did to please you. Let's put these fat boys



in a row on the mantel to help me remember!"

At this moment they all heard a great commotion in the street.

"Somebody's lost," cried the mother; "listen!"

Then came to their ears the voice of the town crier as he lustily rang his bell.

"Lost Doll! Lost Doll! Blue dress, blue slippers, blue hair, blue stockings!"

"Why, that's me!" exclaimed Little Girl Blue in surprise; "but he has my hair wrong. He'll never find me in the world; I must tell him!"

Away she ran out of the house after him, crying, —

"Wait! You are saying it wrong! My hair is n't blue a bit! You never can find me that way!"

Then the hubbub was greater than

ever as the people following him cried, "She's found! She's found!"

Her little mother's papa placed her high up on his shoulder and fairly ran up the street to their home.



As they entered the house he put her down, and said, "Listen!"

And then she heard the sound of sobbing. She crept into the nursery, and there was Alice, her little mother, on the bed, with her face buried in the pillow.

Thinking it was her mother coming into the room, Alice cried,—

"I know why she went. I was naughty about going to bed, and that made her naughty about it. Betty told me all about it.

"She's gone to the woods to live with a sugar lady who lets her go to bed when she pleases. "She wants to do just as I do, and if I would only try harder to be good I know she would."

Just then she felt two tiny arms about her neck, and a little cheek



was pressed close to hers. Then a sweet voice whispered in her ear,—

"Don't cry, mother dear; I'm found, and I'll never run away again, for it is n't a bit of fun to be away from you and to do just as I please!"

As Alice dried her tears, and held her Dolly close, she decided she was right; and I think so, too.

Don't you?



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